

other communications, all of which contribute to general industrial efficiency. Such countries have to learn the distasteful economic lesson that their new productive undertakings should require labour in preference to land or capital and that the vast majority of the population will have to eschew the advantages of white collar occupations.

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Other aspects of the problems facing the people of Mauritius were discussed in a review of *Social Policies and Population Growth in Mauritius* in the July number of THE EUGENICS REVIEW (53, 100). EDITOR.

SOCIOLOGY

PEP. *Family Needs and the Social Services.* London, 1961. Allen and Unwin and PEP. Pp. xi + 233. Price 30s.

ONE HAS OFTEN heard it said, and some people still believe, that the British Social Services since 1948 have "ruined the country" by discouraging personal effort. Those who say this tend to overlook such facts as the existence of very considerable social services in other countries, even in the United States of America, to-day, and also the many facilities that were available in Great Britain between the two World Wars. The attitude of PEP has been quite different and more practical: it has been that one should examine the effectiveness of the services for the purposes for which they were designed. In its latest approach from this direction a sample survey was carried out in order to ask the people—more precisely the mothers of families of dependent children—how helpful they had found the various facilities in solving their personal problems.

If the moral fibre of the country has been weakened over the last decade, it must have been mainly an unconscious process, as one-half of the respondents had not heard of the expression "Welfare State" and did not know its meaning. No one reported the Social Services as providing more than is required, while some thought they could be improved. The majority considered them very helpful. In considering these replies, allowance must be made for the nature of the questionnaire adopted, which set

out to discover the extent of inadequacies and provided no opening for answers concerning any over-adequacy. It may, indeed, have offered too great an opportunity for criticisms of insufficiency, but now that we have comprehensive social services there can be little wrong in seeking to find out where they fall short, even if it is only an occasional fault. "It will do us no harm to remember that, however successful we may be at raising the general level of prosperity, problems of social policy towards the handicapped and the under-privileged are certain to remain."

Before discussing further the results of the inquiry, one should mention that the evidence given in the book for the representativeness of the sample chosen is not very strong. Its demographic characteristics are thinly illustrated, and there were few national data that could be compared with the material collected. As regards area there may well be some bias, as the questioning all took place in Greater London, although a parallel survey conducted in Northampton as a check disclosed a generally similar set of answers. It is probably true to say that the main causes of variation in circumstances, and hence in the need for social services, are differences in income and family size. The incomes in the sample were probably too high but the family sizes appear to have been about right. In regard to age, the data were largely restricted, by definition, to the 20-50 band.

Where complaints of inadequacy were made, the services most often blamed were housing and education. Feelings on these subjects were expressed by different groups, the bottom of the occupational scale being more in difficulty over housing, and the top over education. But all found the health service valuable.

As might be expected, the services as a whole were found to be helpful mainly to families with many children and were appreciated more by the wives of unskilled workers than by those of professional men. The report misses the point that these answers are probably correlated because of the association between unskilled work and large families. The services may thus have some dysgenic effect by helping to maintain social class fertility differentials. But the ranges of percentages helped are fairly narrow:

one-child families 59 per cent to four-child and larger families 88 per cent; managerial and professional families 60 per cent to unskilled operative families 76 per cent. Thus, although these figures do not disclose the *amount* of help received, the extent of any dysgenic effect is probably quite small.

P. R. C.

CRIMINAL LAW

St. John-Stevas, Norman. *Life, Death and the Law.* London, 1961. Eyre and Spottiswoode. Pp. 375. Price 35s.

TO THE CURRENT discussion of the relation between morality and the criminal law Dr. St. John-Stevas has contributed a book which will immediately take its place alongside Dr. Glanville Williams's *The Sanctity of Life and the Criminal Law*. In the context of the change of opinion brought about by psychology, social science, and theological research he discusses such modern moral dilemmas as contraception, artificial human insemination, sterilization, homosexuality and its practice, suicide, and euthanasia; but it is not clear why abortion was omitted. In each case the subject is introduced with a brief historical note; the position under both English and United States law is explained; Christian opinion is comprehensively and accurately stated; and the attendant social and political problems are considered. These expositions are all carefully and fully documented, and no fact or idea of importance seems to have escaped the author's scrutiny, with the result that the reader can turn confidently to any of the sections for reliable information. But this is not only a thorough and scholarly book; it is also very readable, and, above all, informed throughout with a spirit of sympathy and scrupulous fairness and courtesy. Dr. St. John-Stevas is a Roman Catholic of liberal outlook

who writes with understanding and appreciation of those who differ from him, whether as fellow-Christians or as non-Christians, and he does not allow his personal convictions to lead him into polemics or biased conclusions. The result is not only an impressive study in jurisprudence, and an invaluable book of reference, but an outstanding example of the constructive and impartial handling of controversial matters which many others might emulate.

In addition to the special chapters, there are no less than sixteen useful appendices covering almost 100 pages, and an adequate index. And to begin, there is a valuable discussion of the relation between law and morals in which Dr. St. John-Stevas reviews the background to one of the most important questions of our time. This chapter is in one sense the first in significance as well as in order. In a unitary society like that of western Europe in the Middle Ages a satisfactory theory of the relation between law and morals could be grounded in such a concept as that of the Natural Law, to which the Thomist system is so impressive a monument. But in a pluralist society it is less easy to find a moral basis for the law which will command the approval of Christians of divergent traditions, and of secular liberals. No longer is it possible to assume general acceptance of the principle that law should be expressive of morality; indeed, the very notion of morality itself has grown nebulous to many in an age when a utilitarian outlook predominates, and the idea of sin is often derided. Dr. St. John-Stevas does not pretend to offer an easy solution to all the problems of jurisprudence, and of the relation between the citizen and the State, which arise in this situation, but he sets the whole question in perspective, and indicates clearly what issues are of critical importance. His book is worth reading for this opening essay alone.

SHERWIN BAILEY